

COMPT 88-1856

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25 November 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

FROM: Leo Hazlewood
ComptrollerSUBJECT: Congressionally Directed Action from the Omnibus Trade
and Competitiveness Act of 1988

1. Section 5164 of the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (attached) requires each Federal agency to implement by the end of FY 1992 the metric system of measurement in its procurements, grants, and other business-related activities, except when such use is impractical or causes inefficiencies or loss of markets to US firms. To monitor the implementation of this requirement, the Act directs that each agency:

- Establish guidelines to implement the new policy as soon as possible.
- Submit, as part of its annual budget, a report on the actions taken during the previous fiscal year, as well as the actions planned for the current fiscal year, to implement fully the metric system of measurement. Such reports will cease in the fiscal year after the effort has been fully implemented. (CIA's first status report must be submitted as part of our FY 1991 budget submission.) [redacted]

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2. Since the Directorate for Administration is responsible for CIA procurement activities, I would ask you to take the lead on CIA's compliance with the Act's requirements. [redacted] Chief, Plans Staff, Office of Logistics [redacted] and [redacted] Chief, Resource Planning and Management Center in the Directorate of Intelligence [redacted] are already serving as CIA points of contact for an interagency committee on metric conversion. They suggest that an inter-directorate group might usefully evaluate the impact of metric conversion on Agency operations and identify regulatory changes needed to fully implement the metric system. You may want to pursue that suggestion. [redacted]

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3. Please call me or your representative on my staff if we can be of assistance. [redacted]

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[redacted]
Leo Hazlewood

Attachment:
As stated

**SUBJECT: Congressionally Directed Action from the Omnibus Trade
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(25 Nov 1988) (COMPT 88-1856) (AnG # 2665)

(c) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Metric Conversion Act of 1975 is further amended by redesignating section 12 as section 13, and by inserting after section 11 the following new section:

“SEC. 12. (a) As soon as possible after the date of the enactment of this section, each agency of the Federal Government shall establish guidelines to carry out the policy set forth in section 3 (with particular emphasis upon the policy set forth in paragraph (2) of that section), and as part of its annual budget submission for each fiscal year beginning after such date shall report to the Congress on the actions which it has taken during the previous fiscal year, as well as the actions which it plans for the fiscal year involved, to implement fully the metric system of measurement in accordance with that policy. Such reporting shall cease for an agency in the fiscal year after it has fully implemented its efforts under section 3(2). As used in this section, the term ‘agency of the Federal Government’ means an Executive agency or military department as those terms as defined in chapter 1 of title 5, United States Code.

“(b) At the end of the fiscal year 1992, the Comptroller General shall review the implementation of this Act, and upon completion of such review shall report his findings to the Congress along with any legislative recommendations he may have.”.

(b) POLICY.—Section 3 of the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 is amended to read as follows:

“SEC. 3. It is therefore the declared policy of the United States—

“(1) to designate the metric system of measurement as the preferred system of weights and measures for United States trade and commerce;

“(2) to require that each Federal agency, by a date certain and to the extent economically feasible by the end of the fiscal year, 1992, use the metric system of measurement in its procurements, grants, and other business-related activities, except to the extent that such use is impractical or is likely to cause significant inefficiencies or loss of markets to United States firms, such as when foreign competitors are producing competing products in non-metric units;

“(3) to seek out ways to increase understanding of the metric system of measurement through educational information and guidance and in Government publications; and

“(4) to permit the continued use of traditional systems of weights and measures in nonbusiness activities.”.

SEC. 5164. METRIC USAGE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Section 2 of the Metric Conversion Act of 1975 is amended by adding at the end thereof the following new paragraphs:

“(3) World trade is increasingly geared towards the metric system of measurement.

“(4) Industry in the United States is often at a competitive disadvantage when dealing in international markets because of its nonstandard measurement system, and is sometimes excluded when it is unable to deliver goods which are measured in metric terms.

“(5) The inherent simplicity of the metric system of measurement and standardization of weights and measures has led to major cost savings in certain industries which have converted to that system.

“(6) The Federal Government has a responsibility to develop procedures and techniques to assist industry, especially small business, as it voluntarily converts to the metric system of measurement.

“(7) The metric system of measurement can provide substantial advantages to the Federal Government in its own operations.”.